

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 11561

FOR EUR/RPM

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, PORG, MILL, EU, XF, XG, XI
SUBJECT: REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN
MAY-NOVEMBER 1977

REFS: (A) USNATO 11508 DTG 172211Z NOV 77, (B) STATE
259585 DTG 291705Z OCT 77, (C) USNATO 09924 DTG 1418123Z
OCT 77

1. THIS CABLE FORWARDS PROPOSED TALKING POINTS FOR THE
AMBASSADOR'S USE WHEN THE "REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN MAY-NOVEMBER 1977" (MED REPORT) IS REVIEWED
BY THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL (NAC) ON NOVEMBER 23.

ACTION REQUEST DEPT APPROVAL AND COMMENTS ON PROPOSED
MED REPORT TALKING POINTS AS WELL AS SUPPLEMENTARY TALK-
ING POINTS ON MIDDLE EAST DEVELOPMENTS. SEE PARA 4.

2. WE APPRECIATE THE USEFUL GUIDANCE PROVIDED IN REF
B ON THE DRAFT VERSION OF THE REPORT (REF C) AND MOST OF
THE CHANGES HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE CURRENT
VERSION (REF A). FURTHER MODIFICATIONS ARE NOT NORMALLY
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MADE AT THE TIME OF THE NAC REVIEW BUT COMMENTS AND
CORRECTIONS WILL BE MADE ORALLY BY THE PERMREPS AS THEY
CONSIDER THE REPORT ON NOVEMBER 23. THESE COMMENTS THEN
BECOME PART OF THE LARGER RECORD SURROUNDING THE REPORT.

3. BEGIN TEXT OF DRAFT TALKING POINTS: WE APPROVE THE
REPORT AND CONTINUE TO FIND IT A HIGHLY USEFUL SUMMARY

AND ANALYSIS OF EVENTS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, PARTICULARLY REGARDING SOVIET PENETRATION IN THE REGION.

-- WE HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH THE ANALYSIS IN PARA 14 ON THE JOINT US-SOVIET DECLARATION. HOWEVER, RECENT EVENTS HAVE OBVIOUSLY ADDED A NEW DIMENSION. THE RECORD OF OUR DISCUSSION TODAY SHOULD REFLECT THAT THESE DRAMATIC EVENTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE FOLLOWING THE DRAFTING OF THE REPORT.

-- WE NOTE WITH INTEREST THE COMMENT IN THE REPORT ON THE RECENT RISE IN NUMBER OF SOVMEDRON SURFACE COMBATANTS APPROACHING 1975 LEVELS. WE AGREE IT IS TOO EARLY TO SAY IF THIS REPRESENTS A PERMANENT TREND, BUT WE SHOULD CERTAINLY WATCH IT CAREFULLY.

-- WE AGREE THAT THE SOVIET EFFORTS TO GAIN ACCESS TO SUPPORT FACILITIES FOR THE SOVMEDRON HAVE LED TO SOME SUCCESSES, BUT WE DOUBT THIS IMPROVEMENT HAS OVERCOME THE LOSS OF ALEXANDRIA IN 1976.

-- THE REPORT DESCRIBES IN SOME DETAIL THE CONTINUED JOCKEYING BETWEEN THE USSR AND YUGOSLAVIA RELATING TO THE FORMER'S WISH FOR INCREASED ACCESS TO YUGOSLAV SHIPYARDS. YUGOSLAVIA EVIDENTLY CONTINUES TO HOLD FIRM AGAINST THIS SOVIET DESIRE FOR GREATER ACCESS; THIS IS A KEY BAROMETER OF USSR-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS WHICH WE MUST MONITOR CLOSELY. CONFIDENTIAL

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END TEXT.

4. ACTION REQUEST: WASHINGTON APPROVAL AND COMMENTS ON THE TALKING POINTS AS WELL AS ANY COMMENTS ON THE REPORT ITSELF BY OOB NOVEMBER 23 OR EARLIER IF POSSIBLE. IN ADDITION, WE WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO GIVE THE ALLIES SOME INITIAL USG REACTIONS ON THE SADAT VISIT TO ISRAEL AND WOULD APPRECIATE ANY TALKING POINTS THE DEPARTMENT COULD PROVIDE US FOR USE ON NOVEMBER 23. GLITMAN

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